



A BRIEF HISTORY OF TELEDILDONICS

Or, how I learned to stop worrying and love the strap-on



WARNING

Trigger words, etc.

P A R E N T A L

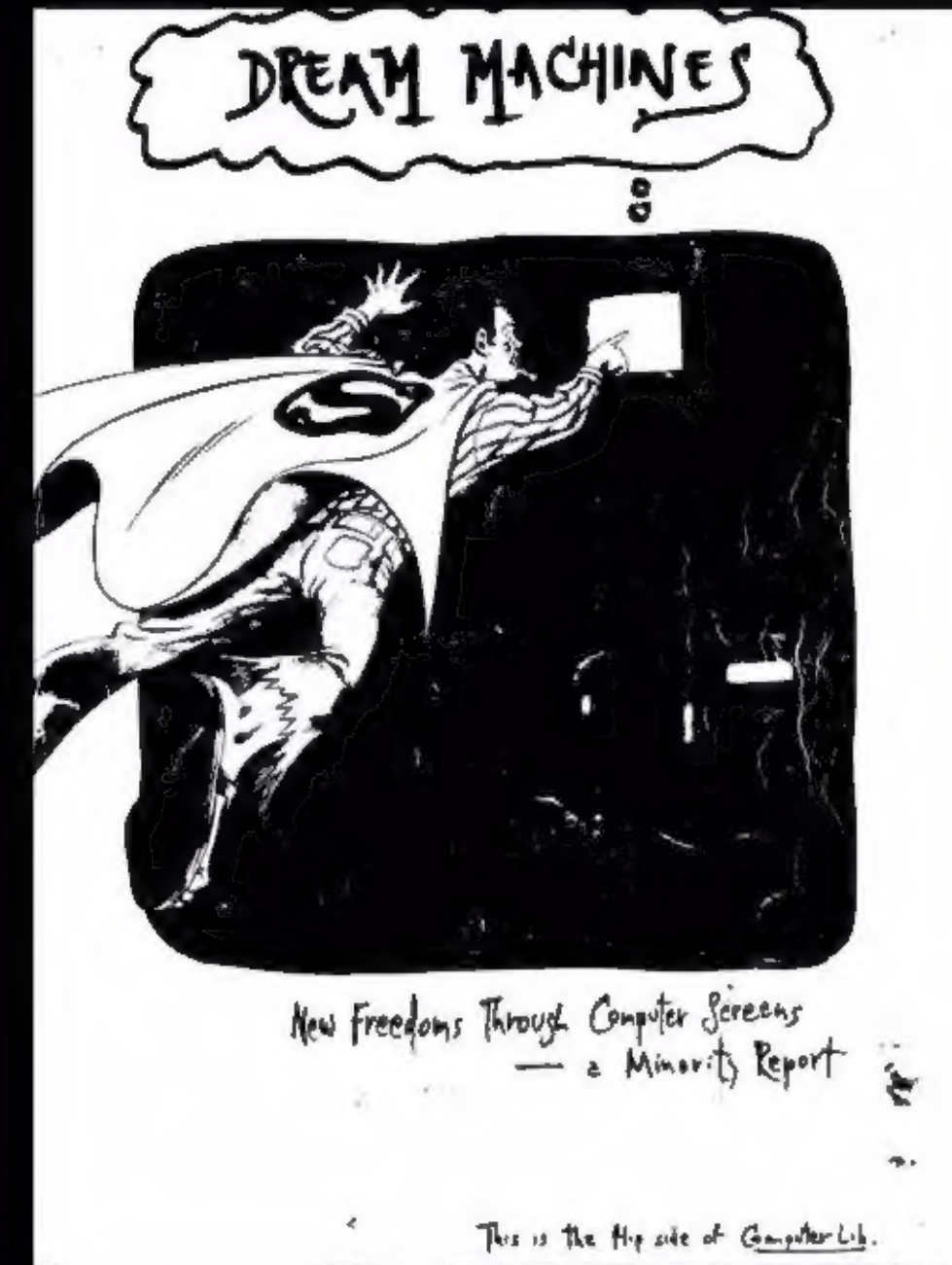
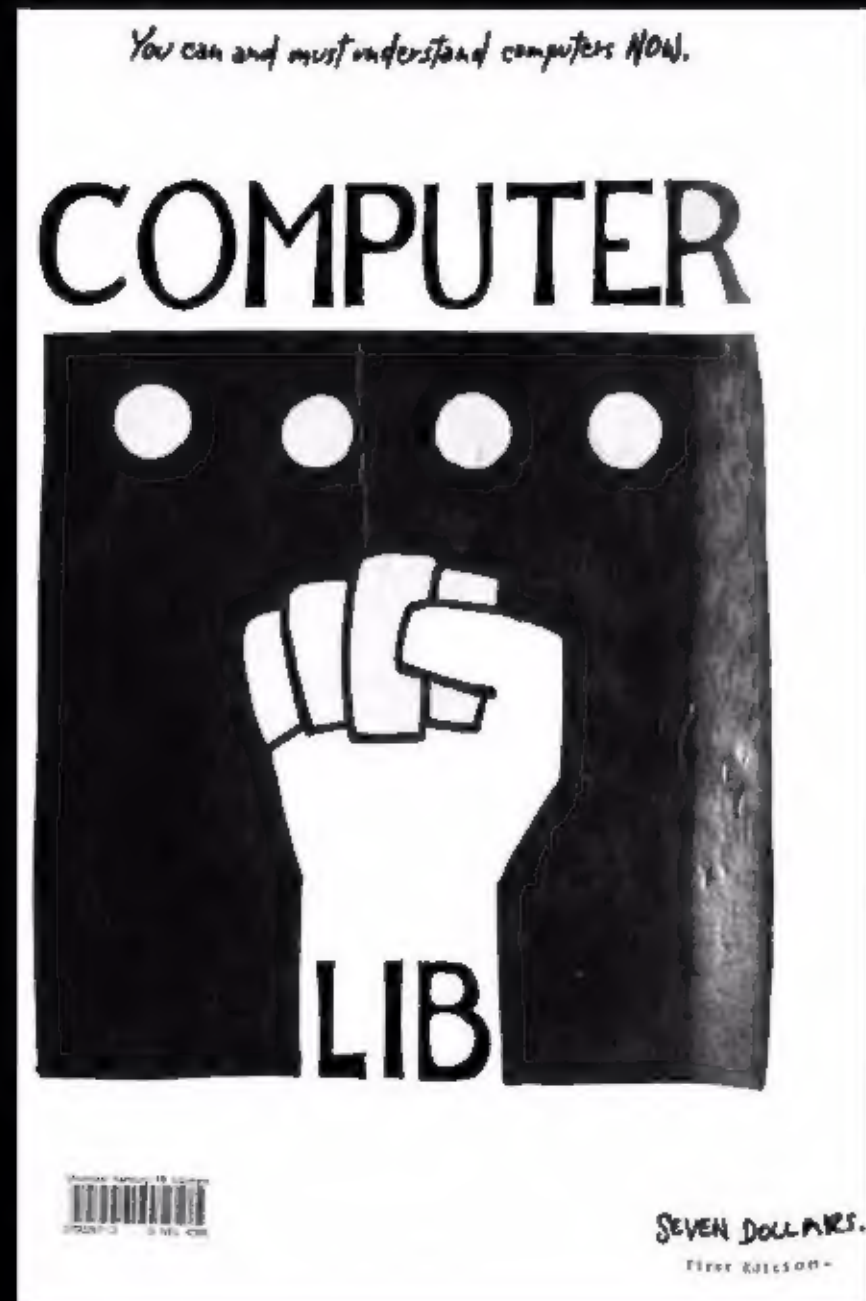
A D V I S O R Y

E X P L I C I T C O N T E N T

FIRST – A DEFINITION

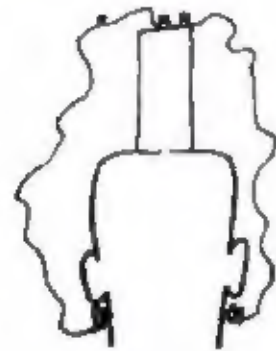
- Teledildonics, to be distinguished from masturbation, requires that sexual stimulation be achieved through interaction other than from the individual receiving the pleasure.
- Further, to distinguish it from pornography, the stimulation should be controlled by another entity, with stimulation occurring in response to actions taken by that entity
- The entity providing pleasure need not be another person, it can be a machine/robot

1974 – OMG SO MUCH DRUGS



TED NELSON

- Dr. Ted Nelson (creator of such famous words as "hypertext"), is credited with having coined "teledildonics" as well
- He did not
- He created the word *dildonics* – in his book "Dream Machines"
- He was one of the first people to use the term however, and brought it into popular usage. But that wasn't until ~5 years after ComputerLib/Dream Machines was published



BODY ELECTRONICS

"I sing the body electric..." — Walt Whitman

There are various people who want to attach electronics to people's bodies and brains.

There are basically two starting points for this ambition. One is authoritarian, the other is altruistic. I am not sure both schools are not equally dangerous, however.

Let's consider first the authoritarians. Prof. Delgado of Yale has demonstrated that any creature's behavior can be controlled by jolts to the brain. Delgado has dealt especially with the negative circuits of the brain, that is, places where an electrical impulse causes pain (or "negative reinforcement"). In Delgado's most stunning demonstration, he stopped a charging bull with just a teeny radio signal. Enthusiastically Delgado tells us how fine this sort of thing would be for controlling Undesirable Human Behavior, too.

Now, let's consider just what we're talking about. In these experiments, needles are implanted in the creature's brain. This can involve removing a section of the skull, or it can be done merely by hammering a long hollow needle straight into the skull and thus the brain.

Even if that weren't a problem, there is the more simpleminded question of who in the existing system would use such techniques. It turns out, of course, that they would be added to what is laughably called the Correctional System, or even more laughably called the Justice System. All the sadists you could possibly want work there. (And no doubt some very nice guys-- but experiments have demonstrated horrifically that decent people, turned into "guards" even for a short time, adopt the patterns of brutality we have known from time immemorial.)

So, like truncheons and electric shock therapy and solitary confinement and everything else, these techniques-- if they are used-- will enter the realm of Available Punishments, not to be used with clinical precision but with gratuitously brutalizing intent, new tools for punitivity and sadism. The "correctional" system would have to be magically corrected itself before such tools could be employed without simply making things worse. And the prospect is not good.

Such schemes grow, of course, from a caricature of the malefactor-- thinking him to be some sort of miswired circuit, rather than a human being caught up in anger, pain, humiliation and unemployment.

(There are also a lot of canards about Free Will, but these do nothing for either side in this controversy.)

NEW FACULTIES

Starting from an entirely different outlook, various designers and bio-engineers are trying to add things to the human body and nervous system, for the voluntary benefit of the recipient.

A number of research and development efforts are aimed at helping those with sensory impairments, and electronics obviously is going to be involved.

An example: a firm called Listening, Inc. in Boston, founded by Wayne Batteau (whom John W. Campbell considered one of the Great Men of Our Time), devised a system for helping the totally deaf to hear. Supposedly this could transmit the actual sensation of hearing into the nervous system by some scarcely-understood form of electrical induction. The machine was sold off; whether it ever got a safety rating I don't know.

This is the sort of thing people would like to do for the blind, as well.

Now, in principle, it might be possible to

PSYCHO-ACOUSTIC DILDONICS

I originally hadn't intended to include anything like this in the book, wanting it to be a family-style access catalog and all that, but this particular item seems fairly important.

Remember how we laughed at the Orgasmotron in Woody Allen's *Sleeper*? Well, it turns out not to be a joke.

An individual named How (not Howard) Wachspress, electronicer-in-residence at a San Francisco radio station, has been developing just that, except that he has more elevated purposes in mind. The secret was broken to the world in *Oui* magazine earlier this year; but Helmer, the publisher, evidently held back the more startling photographs of a model in electronically-induced ecstasy.

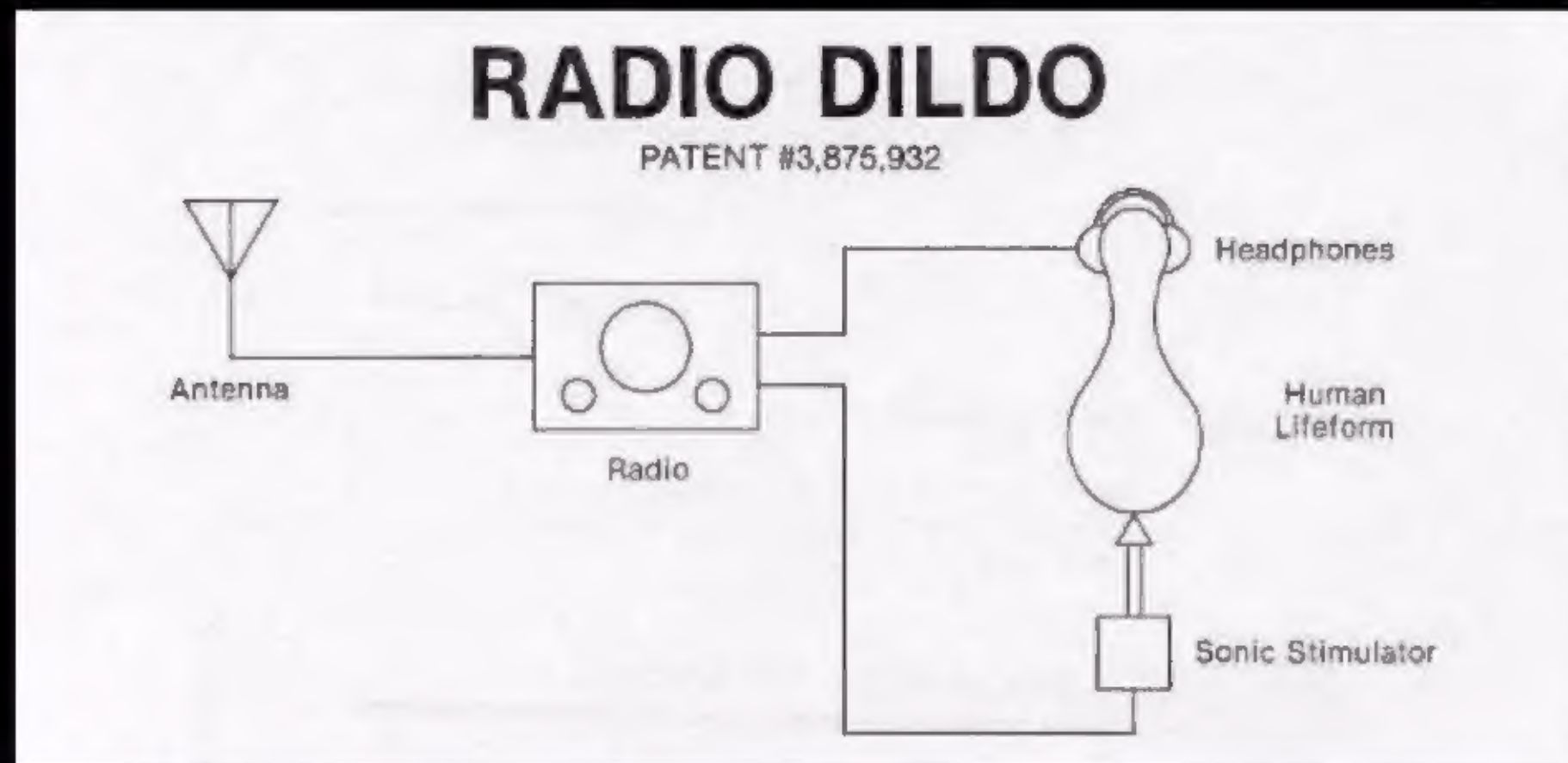
Wachspress' devices transpose sound (as audio signals) into feelings; you touch your body with an open-ended tube or other soft fixture attached to his device-- which in turn is attached to a hi-fi.

The sensations, it is claimed, are profound and moving. You may take them anywhere on your body; the effect is deeply relaxing and emotionally engrossing. Wachspress thinks he has reached an entire neurological system that wasn't known before, much like Oida's discovery of the "pleasure center" in the brain; he sees it as a new modality of experience and a generalization of music and touch. That is the main point. "Hyper-reality" is where he says it gets you: a point curiously congruent with the author's own notions of hypertext and hypermedia as extensions of the mental life.

This said, we can consider the prurient aspects of Wachspress' Auditaec and Teletac devices (which he intends to market in a couple of years as hi-fi accessories, b'gosh). When played with the right audio, in the right places, and a good operator at the controls, they provide a sexual experience said to be of a high order.

Wachspress' work ties in interestingly with

TOUCHIE-FEELIES



- The device referred to in Dream Machines weren't "tele" dildonics at all, they were intended to be used with audio signals sent via radio.
- One of these was called the Auditac: <http://www.auditac.com>

AUDITAC

So good, Rolling Stone wrote about it.

The article featured "Top Ten Songs on the Stroke Parade" among other things

TURN UP THE VOLUME MY FOOT'S ASLEEP

By Charles Perry

It sits there like an old Hoover vacuum cleaner. Only it doesn't inhale dust, it exhales vibrations. And the hilt isn't coming out of a squat globe, but out of the top of a cube about 14 inches on a side, painted fire-engine red. How Wachspress talks about it as if it were a monolith from 2001.

How—that's his whole first name—has luxuriant black hair, immense nutcracker sideburns and a gentle, inward expression as if he's keeping quiet about a surprise party. His monolith is the "Auditac Sonic Stimulator": It's a sort of limited-access loudspeaker for every part of the body except the ears. "The Beatles on your back. Bartok on your belly," crows an Auditac leaflet. "Beethoven between your legs." It's the first in a series of "tactile communication devices" How thinks are going to revolutionize our society as much as television has.

At the moment the pops of the revolutionary device is sitting tight. Not one Sonic Stimulator has been sold, for fear of interference on his patent applications. But on the morning after Richard Nixon's resignation, he kindly consented to give ROLLING STONE's unbiased test panel a demonstration of the device, plus unlimited glasses of apple juice.

The Sonic Stimulator idea is simple. The ear is a specialized organ for transmitting sound signals to the brain, but since sound is merely physical vibrations, any pressure-sensitive organ can "hear." The palm of the hand, for instance (very good, says How; good hi-fi reception because of its abundance of nerve endings). Or the groin (also good for the same reason and because of the various internal organs nearby, each with its own complement of sensors). The elbow and knee are good listeners too, because they readily transfer sound vibrations to the skeleton, thus sending messages from all over the body.

The experience is a little like being at a live concert on about 12 square inches of your body. The music is faintly audible to the ears, but the ale in the probe is pummeling your flesh like a concert hall speaker. How can envision a setup that would cover the entire body with sound vibrations, but would make so little audible noise that the landlady would never know the Fillmore was going on upstairs.

And a better system would involve having the hose filled with liquid instead of air. "Oh yeah," says How. "I've played with it in the bathtub."

It's a long and winding road that has led this 29-year-old from being an aeronautics major at Brooklyn Tech to an audio inventor in a tiny and incredibly compact San Francisco apartment stuffed with electronics paraphernalia—even in the kitchen. Fortunately, How Wachspress is equipped to understand it; he's into Alan Watts, dynamical analogies, basic psycho-physical processes, the concept of unity—understanding things on the level where the essential difference disappears be-



See the teltow? Right below that is Sonic Stimulator, son of Tuning Fork.

tween, say, sound and electricity. As he recounts his life story, he regularly pauses to tuck it up in terms of larger processes. Such as, "So my interest in audio went through these stages: reproduction, recording, synthesis, multimedia."

While explaining things, he doodles arrows on a notepad. "I am a person," he says, "who has survived all sorts of disasters and setbacks because I've known what I wanted to do."

One of his early setbacks was dropping out of Cooper Union at the age of 19. He went to work at a plastics factory, which gave him an idea of what was involved in manufacturing. As a consequence, he says, he has a horror of becoming a manufacturer. When it comes time to manufacture the Sonic Stimulator he envisions non-exclusive licensing of everybody who wants to manufacture it, rather than setting up his own factory. (How promises this soon. The crucial claims of his Teltac patent application have been allowed—and he expects to set up some sort of public showcase within a year.)

During a trip to London in 1966 he

was inspired to revive his childhood dream of being an inventor when he saw a museum exhibit of the prototypes of famous inventions. Back in New York, he stuffed around in audio technology, something he'd returned to after Cooper Union; as a child he had messed around with early model tape-recorders and the like, because his father was an audio engineer. How worked as a news recorder for WBAL-FM in New York and did odd jobs around recording studios, not counting a little research and development for a business machine company.

Then he fell into a situation that changed his life. It was 1969 on the Lower East Side and, as he says, "Hair was in the streets, not on the stage." One of the unique institutions cast up by the wild ferment of those days was a sort of psychedelic playground called Cerebrum. Fifty-six customers at a time would spend a couple of hours wearing translucent white robes, being fed strawberries soaked in wine and playing with touchy-feely toys like giant balloons, lying under collapsed tents of parachute material and stroking each

other with hand lotion. The addition of a low-keyed lightshow and music made it what it was dubbed, a sensorium. How was brought in to fix the sound system; he was also a Cerebrum "guide."

Cerebrum eventually folded, a victim of cashflow problems and, in How's opinion, an inability to interest customers in returning. "Somebody called those the Go-Go Years," he recalls. "It was a wild time, people were trying anything. I got into all the scenes. I was inventing thomsons—I still have a spent library. And it was at that time that I got the original acid bath of multimedias. The idea of two-way tactile communication over a distance. Carrying it to its most outrageous extension, a fuck-by-phone machine."

It was just a flush at the time, though. He started experimenting and realized the essential problem was not how to send messages over a wire—Alexander Graham Bell had settled that—but how to transfer tactile sensations into electronic messages. He went around touching people with tuning forks, blowing into tubes inoching their skin, groping for a key. Eventually this was to lead to the fire-engine-red vacuum cleaner on the floor of a San Francisco apartment.

But not right away. How got a job as sound man and truck driver for a rock band, and got earned in Fort Worth ("once the sound system was working right"). Flat broke and halfway between New York and the West Coast, he decided to go west.

In Los Angeles, he now sheepishly admits, he went to real estate school to organize himself a source of income. In February 1970 he moved to San Francisco and worked in real estate. By this time he'd decided he needed more audio engineering background. He got a first-class radio license and later went back to school for another year.

At school he used the lab to make his first Auditac prototypes in 1971, and by January 1972 one of the prototypes satisfied him. In July he became chief engineer at KSAN, the underground FM station. The next month he gave a public demonstration of Auditac at a seminar of a group called Sexual Attitude Restructuring, held in the basement of San Francisco's avant-garde Glide Memorial Church. The organic response of some of the participants led to an article in London's *Evening Standard* by Richard Neville, line of *Q* magazine, and eventually an article stressing the sexual possibilities of How's inventions in *Out*.

"I'd rather not emphasize the sexual aspect as much as the *Out* story did," says How. "They just concentrated on one aspect. There are so many possibilities." Not that he's above making vulgar comparisons between his baby and a conventional vibrator, the kind advertised "for relieving tension." "This is the competition," he says concededly. "Only one note. And a distorted note. This is not hi-fi. By comparison with the Auditac it's the Stone Age."

But there are the other possibilities. Such as shaking hands with the folks back home. [Continued on Page 38]

THEN WE WAITED



- The computer technology advanced like mad over the next 20 years
- Teledildonics didn't really go anywhere though
- Digital sexual content was primarily relegated to porn
- Some interactive games offered sexual content: Atari's "Custer's Last Stand", and c64's "Samantha Fox's Strip Poker".

THEN CAME THE PC

- Sexual content was still not “interactive” in the teledildonics sense – it was pornographic video or games on CD-ROM
- Classic examples are Leisure Suit Larry, and Virtual Valerie on Mac
- Virtual Valerie got closer to being a truly interactive experience, in that it had dildos that could be controlled via the mouse and used to “pleasure” Valerie
- It still wasn’t teledildonics though



PEOPLE DISCOVER VR

- Once virtual reality started to become practical (in the early 90's) a natural progression of the technology was to figure out how to make teledildonics work
- Like most other early VR experiments, teledildonics didn't really take off because it was clunky and annoying



INTERNET TO THE RESCUE?

- As the Internet became generally available (and really, even when it was still limited), sexual content became prolific
- Newsgroups were full of the sex
- As the web took off, it also was full of the sex
- But this still wasn't teledildonics – it had no physical aspect controlled by another person (or machine even). All stimulation had to be manually performed by the user.

2001/2002 – PLAYSTATION2



TRANCE VIBRATOR

Sold in Japan, the Trance Vibrator was a USB device sold by PlayStation as an additional accessory for the Rez game. It vibrated in sync with the music, similarly to the standard PS2 DualShock controller, but it provided much stronger vibration.

This may be the first instance of commercially available teledildonics

One partner could play the game, controlling the speed and intensity of the vibration through their actions.

The other partner would enjoy the game too.



MORE WAITING

- A lot of technological advances were made in sex toys overall
- RealDoll, Fleshlight, new fun dildo designs, etc.
- However, not much else happened specifically with teledildonics for a few more years



CLICKY CLICKY

AEBN TO THE RESCUE?

- 2008:
The Adult Entertainment Broadcast Network introduced a product called “Real Touch”. It was designed as a male sex toy, that offered “hands free” experience.



- 2012:
AEBN announces a “JoyStick” product, which is intended to be controlled by another person.

REALTOUCH INTERACTIVE

- Users of RealTouch arrange “dates” with models on an interactive site.
- The model uses a JoyStick to perform sexual acts, which are streamed to the customer in real time
- The RealTouch receives data from the model’s JoyStick and reacts in response



FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Oculus Rift is a next-gen VR Display being developed by Oculus VR
- The Novint Falcon is a grip-based USB haptic controller
- Tenga is a Japanese sex toy manufacturer, targeting the male consumer
- What happens if these 3 combine forces?



YO LA TENGA!

<http://www.ibtimes.com/oculus-rift-virtual-reality-sex-simulator-developer-combines-oculus-rift-headset-tenga-novint-falcon>

